Warren Commission and Evidence

Slawson/jv/1-27-64

Slawson chron file.

January 27, 1. Kennedy, John F.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Joseph Ball
Mr. David W. Belin

FROM: W. David Slawson

SUBJECT: Timing of rifle shots.

In figuring out the timing of the rifle shots, we should take into account the distance traveled by the Presidential car between the first and third shots. This tends to shorten the time slightly during which Oswald would have had to pull the trigger three times on his rifle.

For example, I understand that the car traveled about 150 feet between the two shots. Assuming a muzzle velocity of 1500 hundred feet per second, this means that the third shot was fired 1/10th of a second sooner than would seem to be the case without taking this correction into account.

This can be refined even further. Once a bullet leaves a rifle, its velocity decreases rapidly because of wind resistance. Therefore, the average velocity of the bullet on the last 150 feet of its trajectory would be something less than 1500 feet per second, its muzzle velocity. I am sure the ballistic experts could come up with a probable velocity for this last 150 feet which you could use for your calculations. This further refinement would tend to shorten even further the time during which Oswald must have pulled the trigger three times.

CC: Mr. Willens